

PRESIDENT: We will move on to LB 480, please.

CLERK: Mr. President, 480 was a bill introduced by Senator Withem and Senator Barrett. (Title read.) The bill was introduced on January 22, referred to the Government Committee for hearing. The bill was advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments pending by the Government Committee, Mr. President. (Standing Committee amendments found on page 1096 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT: Senator Rupp, please.

SENATOR RUPP: Yes, Mr. President, members, LB 480, as you heard, was brought to us by Senator Withem and the Speaker and the bill, generally speaking, does several things with the receipt and reporting of campaign contributions dealing with the Political Accountability and Disclosure Commission. The committee amendments do basically four things. They are substantive. I think you should listen if you have an interest in this subject. The first thing that it does, it clarifies that earmarked contributions made to a candidate can also be made to a campaign committee, not just to a candidate, but to a committee as well. The second thing it does is rather technical in nature. It changes the requirement that statements be filed June 1, it changes that to January 31. This better complies with the Federal Election Commission and more reflects the notion of a calendar year reporting than a June 1 deadline does. The third thing the committee amendments do is give some flexibility to the commission to reduce the penalties for late filing. The commission can offer relief if, number one, there was no intention to file late; if, number two, the person had not incurred a late filing fee during the preceding two years; number three, less than \$5,000 was raised or expended during the reporting period; and, number four, a reduction in the late fee would not frustrate the purpose of the Political Accountability and Disclosure Act. It simply would give more flexibility to the commission to not assess that penalty for late filing, and I think some of us in this body have experienced that problem and this would loosen that up a little bit to give them more leeway. The fourth thing the committee amendment would do is raise from \$1,000 to \$2,000 the threshold level or the triggering level at which a committee must be formed. Right now a committee must be formed at \$1,000. This would raise that threshold level to \$2,000 being raised in a calendar year and obviously the intent of this is to allow some of those people running for local offices, county commissioner for example, to escape some of the